



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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District of Arizona*

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## **SCOTTSDALE WOMAN PLEADS GUILTY TO WIRE FRAUD**

### *Partnered with Texas man in investment scheme for millions*

PHOENIX - Sharen Stewart, 63, of Scottsdale, Ariz., and Paul K. Bryan, 53, of Texas, pleaded guilty this week to charges relating to a 52-count indictment returned by a federal grand jury. Stewart pleaded guilty to one count of wire fraud and consented to a money judgment in the amount of \$4.8 million dollars. She faces a prison sentence of up to 33 months at her sentencing hearing, set for January 30, 2006 at 9:00 a.m. Bryan pleaded guilty to an Information charging one count of wire fraud and consented to a money judgment in the amount of \$3.1 million dollars. He also faces a sentence of up to 33 months in federal prison during his sentencing hearing on January 23, 2006 at 3:00 p.m.

The 52-count indictment alleged that Stewart and Bryan entered into an agreement to promote "High Yield Investment Programs" and "Managed Trade Programs" to prospective investor-victims including nine victims named in the indictment. These investment schemes claim to offer above average market returns with below market risk through the trading of bank "instruments." In order to induce investors to participate, Stewart advertised that the program was sponsored by the Federal Reserve, that federal compliance officers would be reviewing each transaction and that investment funds would be placed in a Federal Reserve account with a securities firm "licensed by Securities Exchange Commission."

During December 1999 and April 2002, over \$13 million of investor funds were deposited into bank accounts controlled by Stewart and \$3.1 million of investor funds were deposited into bank accounts controlled by Bryan or his associates. The indictment alleged that Stewart converted at least \$4.8 million of investor funds to her personal use, including the purchase of a \$3.8 million home in Paradise Valley, Ariz., and large purchases of artwork from several galleries in Scottsdale, Ariz. in excess of \$455,000. The indictment also alleges that Bryan purchased a \$430,000 home, an \$85,000 vehicle, a \$49,000 boat and over \$11,000 in liquor with investor funds.

The investigation in this case was conducted by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service. The prosecution is being handled by Michelle R. Hamilton-Burns and Paul Rood, Assistant U.S. Attorneys, District of Arizona, Phoenix.

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